

Anderson (R. S.)

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

CLASS OF GRADUATES

OF THE

MISSOURI MEDICAL COLLEGE,

AT THE

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT, HELD MARCH 6th, 1872.

BY ✓

R. S. ANDERSON, M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF GENERAL AND DESCRIPTIVE ANATOMY.

Boar PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

ST. LOUIS:

MISSOURI DEMOCRAT BOOK AND JOB PRINTING HOUSE.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

MISSOURI MEDICAL COLLEGE, *Feb. 27, 1872.*

PROF. R. S. ANDERSON:

DEAR SIR—At a meeting held this day by the Graduating Class of the Missouri Medical College, it was

Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to wait upon Prof. Anderson and request a copy of his Valedictory Address for publication.

C. R. WOODSON, *President.*

R. E. BEACH, *Secretary.*

We, the undersigned Committee, appointed by the President, respectfully submit the above resolution to your consideration, and trust that it will meet with your approbation.

EVAN THOMAS,
FRED. B. MCGUFFEY,
L. P. STOOKEY.

E. BATES FRAYSER, *Treasurer.*

ST. LOUIS, *Feb. 28, 1872.*

GENTLEMEN:

In response to your request, I herewith transmit to you the Address.
Thanking you for the compliment, I remain,

Very truly,

Your friend,

R. S. ANDERSON.

MESSRS. EVAN THOMAS, FRED. B. MCGUFFEY, L. P. STOOKEY, and E.
BATES FRAYSER.

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN GRADUATES:

It is with pleasure that I this evening assume the task of expressing to you the parting words which are to close our connection as Faculty and students. Hereafter we become professional brothers, equals in the prosecution of the glorious science which we have each adopted. But you must always remain to us somewhat nearer and dearer than those upon whom sister colleges have conferred the same degree. For months we have labored to impress upon your minds the guiding truths which are to form the basis of your future efforts, and this long and intimate intercourse has engendered within us a warmer, nearer feeling of friendship and interest than we can bestow upon the offspring of other institutions, however worthy. Heretofore you have been students, trained, in some degree, for the scenes which await you, but now you become soldiers in the ranks, sharers in the labors which follow, and partakers in the rewards which are reaped.

This day is a crisis, an event in your lives. Though closing successfully months of tedious, toilsome labor, though opening to you a vast field of usefulness in the sphere you have chosen, it nevertheless presents its sad as well as its joyous aspects. It is sad in its elements of parting, in the rupture of ties most strongly wrought, sad in the awful responsibilities which we each this night assume—you as the guardians of the lives and health of men, we as the vouchers to society for your fitness. But it is joyous in the happy termination of an arduous test, in the opening of a larger and wider career, in the smiles of present friends, and in the brightly gilded hopes that beckon you to the future.

Standing as you now do upon the threshold of the new domain which you are to enter and possess, let us ascend an imaginary eminence, and view with the mental eye the promised land. What are the nature and objects of the calling which you have this night assumed? what its relations in the mechanism of society? What are the duties which now devolve upon you? What are the means at hand for the accomplishment of your designs, and what the dangers to be encountered and the rewards to be expected?

Our science is as old as the fall of man, coeval with the ministry, both springing from a common cause, and both anciently going hand in hand. Its responsibilities are the greatest, its trusts the highest and most sacred, its ends the noblest and most dignified, of any that pertain merely to this life. Into its hands are given the most vital interests of humanity, the preservation of human life, with all the vast contingencies which this involves. To it is confided the combat with the ills that flesh is heir to. To its charge is given the welfare of communities—sometimes the safety of States. To it equally appeal the prince, who is “born in the purple, and heir to the sceptre and crown,” and the beggar at his gates, who nurses his sores in the sun. To it the mother, with unquestioning faith, confides the dearest treasure of her life, the feeble babe, who with helpless hands implores of you rescue from the unknown beyond. To it the husband, the father, appeals on behalf of the idols of the household. It presides, with its saving arts, at the threshold of life; it also smoothes with gentle hand the inevitable passage to the grave. What, then, should be its place in the estimation of the community, what its rank in the organization of society? We answer proudly that as, excepting the divine calling, its objects are the highest and most holy, its trusts the grandest and most sacred, the talents required in its service the loftiest and most cultivated, so its rank should be the highest, its rewards the greatest, and its honors the most of any.

Gentlemen, your lines have fallen in pleasant places, and you have a goodly heritage. To you the science and art of medicine opens the vast storehouse of its accumulated wealth, garnered in the passage of ages. These treasures, containing the recorded experience of two thousand years, are legacies left to you, and to the world through you, by those who have labored and gone

before. They give freely of their knowledge, often gained at the cost of lives of toil and thought, often of health and life itself. They ask nothing in return but the honor of having served humanity. They place your beginning at their ending, and in the richer, brighter light of this latter day, they bid you God-speed in your progress onward. Take heed that you do not squander this inheritance. If it is not in its fullness, according to your several abilities, applied for the good of those committed to your care, you are dishonest stewards; nay, almost criminal defaulters. If the tradesman is guilty who palms inferior wares upon his customers, how much more so is the physician who trifles in ignorance with the dearest interests of life itself, and does not furnish the best article of science which circumstances and the advanced state of knowledge will permit.

Our science is necessarily progressive, and each successive year, each higher thought, each further discovery, brings it nearer to its "utmost goal and final resting-place"—the perfection of exactitude. Already some of its component parts—Anatomy, Chemistry, and we might say Physiology—have almost attained this consummation, but in the others the ultimate truth still "lies at the bottom of the well." To some of you fate may have reserved the genius, the industry, the fortune, like another Newton, Lavoisier or Schwann, to furnish to each of these *its* primitive fact, and to stamp upon the embodied whole the precision and completeness of perfection! Such glory for some is pregnant in the womb of the immediate future. For the signs of the times point to grand advances, and coming events are casting their shadows before. The startling discoveries lately made in the collateral physical sciences, the rapid improvement and perfection of our means of observation, the vast army of enthusiastic scientists who are now eagerly pressing forward, all portend the glorious future. The rays of the dawning day are breaking over the hill-tops. Now, "better far a year in Europe than a cycle in Cathay." In this progress, you are elements; therefore, be not idle. To stand still is to fall behind. To lag in the race is to court the fate of the unprofitable servant, to incur the disgrace of the buried talents.

"Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
 Wherein he puts alms for oblivion—
 A great-sized monster of ingratitude.
 These scraps are good deeds *past*, which are devoured
 As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
 As done. Perseverance, dear my lord,
 Keeps honor bright. To *have* done is to hang
 Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail,
 In monumental mockery. Take the instant way,
 For honor travels in a strait so narrow,
 That one but goes abreast. *Keep*, then, the path,
 For emulation hath a thousand sons,
 That one by one pursue. If you give way,
 Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
 Like to an entered tide they all rush by,
 And leave you hindermost."

As is the telegraph to the post-horse, or the locomotive to the coach, so are the present appliances of our era of science to those of our fathers. Our microscope shows hidden worlds by them undreamed of. By its marvellous power we may observe and study the most secret, intricate processes and forms of life. To our skilled ears, through the stethoscope and pleximeter, the cavity of the chest gives up in music its most subtle secrets. By means of other apparatus for the extension of our senses, various cavities, organs and recesses of the body are open to our inspection and to our skill, which were but a few years since as hidden as the secrets of the Catacombs. By our test-tubes and reagents the slightest changes in the relations of the constituents of the body may be detected, and by our improved therapeutics relieved. By our greater knowledge of anatomical forms and physiological processes, almost every organic function has been traced to its ultimate physical origin. Nay, even the mysterious essence of life itself—the "vital force" which moves this wondrous organism—has, by the genius of one of our own number—now, alas! not with us—been removed from its solitary, anomalous pedestal, and demonstrated to be in harmony with and a part of the universal laws that govern matter.

What a debt does humanity already owe to the healing art! It is not to be computed in figures, it cannot be expressed in words. How many millions of years have been added to the sum of human life, and what vast advantages have accrued as the resultant of these years! The mind stands bewildered at

the magnitude of the problem. Should the influences for good generated by our labors, with all their relations to the arts, sciences, and the progress of nations, be suddenly blotted out, a pandemonium would ensue to which chaos would be a paradise. More lives are saved yearly in Europe alone by Jenner's immortal discovery than have been lost in a century's bloody wars. And even war itself, the dread result of the frenzy of nations, has by the beneficent influence of our art been robbed of half its fearful terrors. The hospital, the ambulance, the knife, the ligature and the splint, with their anæsthetic allies, are now as essential to the welfare of armies as the skill of generals or the efficiency of arms. In the quiet walks of ordinary life the influences of the medical art are all-pervading, and here perform their chiefest, noblest work. Quinine renders habitable whole districts where, without it, the foot of man could not in safety tread. Over the greatest of physical evils, in whose presence both the strong and the weak, both man and beast, alike cower and shrink — over *pain* — our science has achieved a series of brilliant, unequivocal victories; for it is the pain and suffering of illness and dissolution that are more dreaded by our coward, shrinking natures than the hereafter that may come when we have "shuffled off this mortal coil." Morphine, Ether, Chloroform, Chloral — Lethean waters for physical woes — who can estimate the world of agony they have prevented and relieved? Over this inveterate foe we have almost an absolute dominion. We can now make comfortable the tedious, lingering hours of illness, and, if necessary, even provide

"The smooth descent, the gentler way
To mingle kindly with our fellow-clay."

The general field of therapeutics offers no less convincing, though perhaps less striking, facts. The wonderful progress lately made in *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy are bearing rich fruits. No longer are our patients drenched with nauseous, inefficient draughts, or choked with unwieldy boluses. The greater elegance in which our remedies now appear is only surpassed by the greater efficiency with which they act. We hear no more of the ague extending for ten, thirty or forty years. Under late treatment the inveterate racking rheumatism assumes a mild and manageable form. Pneumonia and typhoid fever, once so fatal, are now rarely so. And consump-

tion, with its protean forms of disaster and death, is frequently by skill and care averted; and if not, may often be robbed of its most imminent dangers, and the gradual decline made gentle, sometimes even pleasant. Scurvy, now so seldom heard of, but which a hundred years ago slew yearly its thousands, is now by simple means become so rare that probably none of you have ever seen it. To those holding "the vile heritage of the sins they have not sinned," and to those who by transgression have come under the ban, our science comes in the garb of a Savior, and says through its remedies: "Son, daughter, arise." The same wisdom which has given the law and enforced the penalty has confided to our science, under Him, the pardon. How rash, how short-sighted are those who, in their little hour, would limit by their narrow minds the provisions of Divine mercy or prescribe the extent of His love! All diseases, all suffering, sorrow and pain, are equally penalties inflicted for the violation of nature's laws. And nature's laws are God's. As well might we loosen the reins that hold in check the small-pox; as well might the filthy, undrained streets and pools cry out to heaven for cholera; as well might the cut artery be allowed to drain the rich life-blood, as that any remedy should be permitted to fail of its heaven-born power, or any of God's creatures be left to unnecessary suffering.

Time would fail me to enter at greater length into the general subject, or to particularize further the blessings conferred on humanity by the development of special branches of our art. Suffice it to say that by the skill and appliances of the ophthalmologist, the aurist, the laryngoscopist, the orthopedist and the gynechologist, thousands now see and hear and walk, who fifty years ago would have been condemned to pitiful lives of misery, suffering and exclusion. In prophylaxis and hygiene, in the discovery and application of those general laws which have contributed so much to the happiness of communities and nations, in ventilation and drainage, in the erection and support of hospitals and asylums, in the science of dietetics and the non-medical management of the sick, our profession has always taken the lead and performed the chief labor. All these means have lengthened the scale of the probabilities of human life 33 per cent. over that of a century ago. In surgery the saving of life exceeds by 35 per cent. the results at the beginning of this century. According to Macaulay, the difference in the health

of London in the nineteenth and in the seventeenth centuries is as great as the difference now between London in ordinary years and London in the cholera. Statistics show not only this, but that the duration of sickness, and consequently of pain and suffering, has been diminished fully one-third. What may be the sum of the lesser, the more individual benefits which medicine has conferred on man, cannot be known to us, but are known and recorded by Him who notes the fall of a sparrow and numbers the hairs of our heads.

In view, gentlemen, of the vast responsibilities which you this night assume, in view of the decisive, the final step which you are now taking, it is meet that you should pause and weigh well the significance of the circumstances which now surround you. To dedicate the labors of a life, to pledge all your energies and talents to a single purpose, is a grave, a serious undertaking. Unless with unflinching zeal and steadfast purpose you accept all the contingencies, all the trials now before you; if you are merely trying an experiment, to be abandoned if success is not immediate and brilliant; if your object is to find a level, flowery path to success and fortune, I now solemnly warn you from the endeavor. Lose no more time in the useless, thankless task. It has been said that "not every ship that sails from Tarshish comes back laden with the gold of Ophir." The way is long and weary, the dangers many and great; there are breakers, storms, and darkness. Science is a hard mistress, and exacts from her worshippers nothing less than their entire devotion. She will take no dilatory service, but bestows her favors only upon those who court her with undivided heart. Fortune is not so blind as she is painted, and, in the eternal fitness of things, success is measured by the toil that brings it—

"Men at some times are masters of their fates;
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

Unskillful hands and idle brains but clog the passages. The unconquerable enthusiasm of youth has achieved greater triumphs than even the calm reason of maturer age.

The early experience of most of you will be very trying. The service is hard, the delays tedious and discouraging. The neglect of friends upon whom you have counted will be very

galling; the errors necessary to inexperience will be disheartening. You may not meet with help, encouragement and sympathy where you should most expect it, among the older practitioners of your art. But your zeal for science and your love for humanity will atone for all. Despise not these days of little things; they should be golden, fruitful days—days in which you will lay up treasures of thought, research and observation, which in after-times will bring you much reward. And when your hour of success comes, as it will come to all true and faithful laborers, it is but the commencement of a harder, a more laborious service. Others have set times of ease, their seventh days of rest, their relaxation from toils and cares. But the busy doctor can count no moment absolutely his own. In the busy, bustling day, as well as in the still watches of the night, in the sunshine and the rain, “in the peltings of the pitiless storm,” he must be ready for his errand of mercy.

“When the blessed seals that close the pestilence are broke,
And crowded cities wall its stroke;”

when men’s hearts fail within them, and it is not only their right but their duty to flee from the danger “that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noonday,” then must he be always at his post, with skill and courage, brain and nerve, to do and dare, and die if need be, for the welfare of society, in the service of humanity and for the charge committed to his care. It is then that his ministrations are most needed, his office most sacred. It is then that he plants the flowers of mercy on the graves of buried hopes. It is then that his calm bearing brings courage to the sinking heart, that his presence and skill give hope to the despairing soul. Yours is the part of danger in the battle and at the fireside, and your lives will average shorter than those of any other class who enjoy the immunities of civilized life.

The mental anxiety for the welfare of your patients which, if you are conscientious, must necessarily cloud many hours in your lives, will be a no small item in the sum of your cares. These are the shadows which will strike more terror to your souls than more substantial troubles. How much will they underrate your services who will deem them included in the visit, the questions, the inspection of the tongue, the feeling of

the pulse, and the prescription. These are but the carrying out of the results of many hours of careful study, of patient thought, of anxious weighing of symptom and remedy. Most of your work will be done in the intervals of your active life, in the seeming leisure of your office hours, or in the stillness of the night.

Few of you, gentlemen, will find a royal road to success. You must be the architects of your own fortunes. To some, doubtless, by reason of personal and social advantages, the favor of influential friends, or by a combination of fortuitous circumstances, the way may be shorter and easier than to the rest. But to the most a long novitiate, a weary waiting remains. Do not complain of this; it is as it should be. These years of seeming leisure are often precious years to science. It is then that the plan is made and the foundation laid which are to determine the nature of the superstructure. It is then that you should train your minds, your eyes, your hands; then that you should thoroughly arm yourselves at all points for the arduous and responsible duties that must surely follow. "*Nulla dies sine linea.*" No success can be solid and lasting that is not bought by persistent, patient exertion. The grace of personal blandishments, the skill in pretense and boasting, the arts of the quack and charlatan, may, and often do, seduce the popular fancy for a while. But it is the confidence of the community in the tried and proved physician, a plant of slower growth, that endures. Rather, therefore, seek by patient diligence, in season and out of season, by always doing the duty lying next, by study and care in the management of the appliances within your reach, to acquire the firmly-fixed respect and affection of your patients, which neither the clamor of public prejudice, the envious detraction of unprincipled rivals, or the unfortunate issue of occasional cases, can either affect or disturb. Above all things, be honest, just and truthful. The steady common sense, the sober second thought of the community seldom errs, and generally justly discriminates between the sheen of the pure metal and glare and glitter of baser stuff. The highest talents, the most cultivated mind, the most elegant address will not bring you lasting success if you neglect the plain duties of man to man, or swerve from the rules that govern the perfect gentleman. Avoid all mystery and pretense. Our profession can stand on its own merits, and the tendency of the age is to

the liberalization of science. Let fair *truth* be your guide, it is an attribute of God, as eternal, as infallible as He.

“As all Nature’s thousand changes
But one changeless God proclaim,
So through Art’s wide kingdom ranges
One sole meaning still the same;
This is *Truth*, eternal reason,
Which from Beauty takes its dress,
And serene, through time and season,
Stands for aye in loveliness.”

Let the sense of *duty* always constrain you. We have little else to live for, for with the happiest the sorrows outnumber the joys. Even the “cup of thanksgiving is mingled with tears.” But neither pleasure nor sorrow are the objects of our lives. It is in the performance of duty that we meet our highest, noblest ends. It is in this that our enjoyments are heightened, our misfortunes solaced; in this that we live for others rather than for ourselves, and “leave our footprints on the sands of time.”

To those of you who persevere to the end the recompense is not wanting. If our toils are greater than those in other pursuits, if our risks are more hazardous and our trials more severe, our rewards are in proportional excess, our wages are worth the labor. That “providence that tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,” that holds in equal balance the issues of time and eternity, metes to us also our just equivalent. There are flowers blooming in the way that not only hide the thorns, but heal their wounds. The subjective influences of our science are ennobling and exalting. He who is bred among the heights and depths of Alpine scenery, under clear and cloudless skies, in the pure atmosphere of the mountains and valleys, becomes grander in stature and nobler in presence than the denizen of the monotonous plain. The inhabitant of the rich tropical clime acquires from the brilliant and luxurious vegetation, the songs of beautiful birds, and all the treasures of lavish nature spread before his sight, a grander, richer language, and a wider, nobler range of thought than the torpid dweller in the frigid zones. So with us. The mind grows upon what it feeds. The constant contemplation of the grandest works of nature, the continual search into the most hidden mysteries of life, the daily dealing with what is noblest and highest of nature’s works,

generates within us a development of mind, an elevation of thought, a latitude of idea which is foreign and impossible to the cultivator of meaner pursuits.

And our objective rewards are not less because less apparent. I speak not of the gross material emoluments of our art. There is in this regard but little for congratulation. But the consciousness of being useful to humanity; of doing good in our day and generation; of filling a place, however small, in the grand economy of nature, which might otherwise be less usefully occupied—these are wages that to the highest minds are priceless and unfading. And if any of you should fortunately advance in any sensible degree the knowledge of our science or the appliances of our art; should any of you burst the lock of oblivion that confines a principle that will lessen the load under which your fellow-man labors, then to you is reserved a niche in the temple of fame; to you an ever-widening influence for good will be ascribed, till the roll-call of nations ends the concerns of time!

To the humblest among you there will be, in the practice of our profession, many seasons of unalloyed pleasure. The respect of men that will always follow honest, manly endeavor, the gratitude for services that money cannot repay, the esteem of the intelligent and the good, the happy result of painfully wrought plans, the solidness and security of final success—these will repay you for many a wakeful, anxious night, many a day of hardship and toil.

So, gentlemen, farewell! We send you to your work, and send our blessing with you. We will follow your future with anxious, trusting hope. Let your ALMA MATER be to you a Mecca, and we will always welcome your return to her halls.

GRADUATING CLASS
OF THE
MISSOURI MEDICAL COLLEGE,
FOR THE SESSION 1871-72.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>State or Country.</i>	<i>Subject of Thesis.</i>
BEACH, R. E.	Illinois.....	Dysentery.
BLACHLEY, F. C.	Kansas.....	Scarlatina.
BLAKE, T. F.	Missouri.....	Scarlatina.
CLAY, H. S.....	Missouri.....	Inflammation.
COOKE, J. T.....	Mississippi....	Variola.
CURFMAN, G. W.....	Iowa.....	The Hand.
DAY, CYRUS.....	England.....	Inflammation.
FRAYSER, E. BATES.....	Missouri.....	Primary Syphilis.
GRISTY, J. C.....	Iowa.....	Mechanism of Labor.
HARTMAN, M. T.....	Missouri.....	Pleuritis.
HATTON, JOHN.....	Missouri.....	Infection.
KLINE, WM. J.....	Missouri.....	Pneumonitis.
LATIMER, M. A.....	Iowa.....	Diphtheria.
MILLER, E. H.	Missouri.....	Phthisis Pulmonalis.
MCGUFFEY, F. B.....	Ohio.....	Tetanus.
MOORE, F. H.....	Missouri.....	Diagnosis.
NICHOLS, P. G.....	Missouri.....	
PARRISH, J. G.....	Virginia.....	The Thermometer.
THOS. PEEVY.....	Missouri.....	
SANFORD, F. D.....	Iowa.....	Dislocation of the Scapula.
SEEBER, C. W.....	Missouri.....	Erysipelas.
SELMAN, B. G.....	Texas.....	The function of the human Spleen.
STOOKEY, L. P.....	Illinois.....	Duration of Pregnancy.
STUART, OREN.....	Iowa.....	Dyspepsia.
THOMAS, EVAN.....	England.....	Hydrophobia.
THORN, J. C.....	Illinois.....	Primary Syphilis.
TURNER, W. A.....	Kansas.....	Phthisis Pulmonalis.
WILSON, J. B.....	Iowa.....	Hysteria.
WOODSON, C. R.....	Missouri.....	Scarlatina.

AD EUNDEM DEGREE.

GEO. W. BROOME, M.D.....	Missouri.
WM. J. CAMPBELL, M.D.....	Illinois.
J. W. CARLTON, M.D.....	Illinois.
M. D. CLARK, M.D.....	Illinois.
JAS. W. DUNCAN, M.D.....	Illinois.
J. W. EATON, M.D.....	Missouri.
B. W. FORSEE, M.D.....	Illinois.
JOHN MACLEAN, M.D.....	Illinois.
S. F. SANDERS, M.D.....	Illinois.
GEO. W. WRIGHT, M.D.....	Illinois.
W. T. WRIGHT, M.D.....	Illinois.

HONORARY DEGREE.

ED. MONTGOMERY, M.D.....	St. Louis.
Prof. GUSTAV. HEINRICH, M.D.....	Iowa.
JNO. F. SANDFORD, M.D.....	Iowa.

